UNITED
NATIONS

DP

Executive Board of
the United Nations
Development Programme
and of the United Nations
Population Fund

Distr.
GENERAL

DP/CCF/BGD/1/EXTENSION I
23 June 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Third regular session 1998
14-16 and 21-22 September 1998, New York
Item 4 of the provisional agenda
UNDP

UNDP: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

EXTENSION OF THE FIRST COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR BANGLADESH

Note by the administrator

I. JUSTIFICATION

1. The first country cooperation framework (CCF) for Bangladesh, which covered the period July 1995 to June 1998, was approved by the Executive Board at its first regular session 1996. The Government of Bangladesh and UNDP reviewed the implementation of the CCF in February 1998 and agreed on a number of measures for enhancing delivery, monitoring and capacities for national execution, including a comprehensive review in February 1998. As part of local Consultative Group meetings, ongoing consultations between UNDP, the Government and other development partners confirmed the continued relevance of the first CCF.

2. The Government of Bangladesh has requested a two-year extension of the first CCF through June 2000, to enable harmonization of future programming by Joint Consultative Group on Programme (JCGP) agencies, within the framework of a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Bangladesh, to be prepared in 1999. The UNDAF would provide the framework for the UNDP advisory note on the second CCF, scheduled to be submitted to the Government in late 1999.

3. The first CCF was conceived as a three-year rolling framework in line with the then current national planning processes. The operationalization of the CCF took longer than anticipated, owing to the innovative and participatory approaches adopted and the comprehensive nature of appraisal and approval processes. The first CCF adopted sustainable human development as its principal focus, concentrated most UNDP cooperation at the local level and involved new

partners that were not familiar with UNDP procedures. Furthermore, national execution was adopted as the predominant modality for project implementation, for which national capacity is currently being built. The combination of these factors has delayed project implementation and will lead to a significant carry-over of unspent resources into the recommended extension period.

4. In addition to allowing for the harmonization of programming with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) (both agencies current programmes end in the year 2000), and the introduction of collaborative initiatives with regard to Government/JCGP cooperation, the CCF extension would:

(a) Allow the Government and UNDP to address implementation problems, through further enhancement of national capacities for managing national execution and the programme approach. To this end, initiatives are under way to: review capabilities, procedures, and support requirements for national execution (including cooperation arrangements with United Nations Office for Project Services, United Nations specialized agencies, and civil society organizations (CSOs); articulate functions and responsibilities as well as operational requirements for more rigorous monitoring and evaluation; and further integrate capacity development targets and measures in all programmes;

(b) Provide sufficient lead time for a comprehensive review of the CCF, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the innovative approaches supported by it. The review would then provide a basis for the preparation of the next CCF.

II. OBJECTIVES

5. The overriding objective of the Government's development efforts continues to be poverty alleviation, to be realized by, inter alia, the generation of productive employment, the achievement of food self-sufficiency, human resources development, the development of infrastructure, curbing population growth, the provision of social services, sustainable resource management, closing the gender gap and improvement of management and governance systems.

6. The strategy and areas of coverage of the CCF have been revalidated by a number of government initiatives. In the area of poverty alleviation, initiatives are under way at the grass-roots level, including community empowerment initiatives that involve CSOs, and at the policy level, including the recent establishment of an interministerial committee to advise on the consolidation and replication of Bangladesh's component of the South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programme. The Government approved the National Environment Management Action Plan (NEMAP) in 1995, which had been developed over a five-year period through an innovative participatory process, involving the Government, communities, CSOs, researchers and donors. A national, consultative process was initiated in 1997 to design a national non-formal employment programme. In follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action, a National Policy for Advancement of Women was adopted in March 1997 and a comprehensive National Action Plan was finalized. The Government has initiated reforms in public management to ensure that development benefits the poor, who comprise the

majority of the population, especially women. To address HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), a national policy that builds upon UNDP-supported preparatory work was approved in April 1997. The UNDP areas of concentration remain most relevant in elaborating and reinforcing national programmes and policies.

III. PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

7. The central objective of the CCF is to enable the poor to improve their livelihoods, through programmes and projects in support of social mobilization and participatory planning, accountable and responsive governance, capacity development to improve efficacy and efficiency in public and private service delivery, as well as environment regeneration and sustainable natural resource management. In all support activities, priority is given to the needs of the poorest of the poor and to the advancement of women.

8. As part of UNDP support for poverty alleviation, 11 community empowerment projects (CEPs) are at various stages of implementation, which will have a direct impact on the lives of approximately 400,000 people. The organizing principle for the CEPs is social mobilization of the poorest members of local communities to enable them to gain control over the factors and decisions that affect their livelihoods. Social mobilization activities are complemented by skills and leadership development, micro-finance services and the facilitation of access by communities to productive and social services through public and private service providers. Capacity development activities aim at increasing self-help and enhancing the functional and managerial capacities of service providers. The CEPs underpin the democratization process by contributing to the reactivation and responsiveness of local government at the union and sub-district levels. The CEP in Sirajganj will be complemented by a United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) local development fund (LDF), which will strengthen the ability of the local government to respond to community demands. The CEPs also offer channels for better targeting of ongoing government and donor-supported programmes. The recent decision by the Government to establish an interministerial committee to oversee the pivotal South Asian Poverty Alleviation Programme (RAS/96/600) offers scope for drawing lessons and for policy-making, in conjunction with UNDP-assisted poverty monitoring at national and subregional levels.

9. Two areas of Government/UNDP cooperation on poverty alleviation have received more emphasis than originally envisaged. Firstly, given the potential threat of HIV/AIDS to Bangladesh, UNDP has been asked to assist the preparation of a HIV/AIDS multisectoral national strategic plan and a five-year National Plan of Action (NPA), in support of the recently approved national policy on HIV/AIDS and STD-related issues. The Government would like UNDP to provide further assistance, concentrating on (a) management of the NPA, (b) safe blood transfusions, (c) information, education and communication, and (d) promoting behaviour change. In addition, UNDP and other members of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS have been requested to support the Government's efforts to mobilize and coordinate additional donor support. Secondly, in view of the prevailing malnutrition, modest growth in the agriculture sector and population pressure, the Government, UNDP and selected United Nations agencies

and donors agreed in 1997 to urgently address the area of food security. In pursuing its commitment to the outcome of the World Food Summit 1996, the Government has requested that UNDP support focus on two components, the subprogramme on sustainable natural resources management aims at community empowerment for on- and off-farm livelihood development of marginal farmers, the landless, women and other disadvantaged persons in areas where CEPs are being implemented; focus is on household food security, horticulture, production and nutrition, and coastal fishing. The subprogramme on food-assisted sustainable human development - a joint effort of the Government, UNDP and WFP - aims at the innovative development of the ongoing Government/WFP Rural Development Programme and the Vulnerable Group Development Programme, including the integration of these programmes as part of development-oriented programmes at the local level.

10. UNDP support to the Sustainable Environment Management Programme (SEMP) was approved in December 1997. Complementary donor support to SEMP includes a $12 million Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) component focused on "brown" pollution issues, $30 million of World Bank support for policy planning and coordination and small grants from the Government of Norway to CSOs. The UNDP-supported SEMP components cover the "green" priorities of the National Environment Management Action Plan, initially focusing on community-level activities, and strengthening national environmental policies and legislation. UNDP has also been requested to further strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Environment and Forests to coordinate the implementation of 26 specific components to be co-implemented by government and other national institutions. Other UNDP support in the field of environment includes preparatory assistance under the Global Environment Facility for the formulation of a $3 to 5 million Coastal and Wetland Biodiversity Management programme; Montreal Protocol-supported initiatives for the phasing-out of ozone-depleting substances, support to the Department of Environment to undertake economic control measures and monitoring and evaluation; and support in developing initiatives under Capacity 21. In addition, UNDP and UNICEF have been requested to strengthen the capacity of the Disaster Management Bureau.

11. A broad-based, national programming exercise was initiated in 1997 to design a national non-formal employment programme to provide livelihood opportunities for the vast number of unemployed and underemployed poor, especially women, and to facilitate the absorption of new entrants into the labour market. In addition, UNDP will support a number of interventions to further develop rural cottage industries and expand micro-finance services and vocational and technical training for the semi-literate and semi-skilled poor.

12. UNDP support to implementation of the National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women has been outlined in consultation with the Government and donors. A UNDP-supported multisectoral project will build capacities at the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs for gender mainstreaming in national programmes. At the subnational level, UNDP assistance has been requested for the socio-economic empowerment of women through, inter alia, skills training, support services, training assistance, and micro-finance services to thousands of poor rural and urban women.

13. In acknowledgement of the organization's impartial, effective support to the June 1996 parliamentary election, UNDP has become a lead partner in the area

of governance. This has enabled the design of a wide-ranging Governance Programme, including support for the strengthening of Parliament, electoral reform, public administration reform, judicial reform, transparency, local governance, human rights and security, the establishment of independent media, and the institutionalization of an ombudsperson. In most of these areas, capacity development projects are under implementation at local, subnational and national levels. UNDP and UNDCF will cooperate in support of improved local governance by linking the training of Union Parishad members with the LDF pilot project. The Governance Programme is contributing to enhancing the rule of law, improving human security, and underpinning democratization and decentralization processes at the various levels of local government.

14. Following the CCF implementation review of February 1998, initiatives are under way to enhance the effectiveness of programme and project implementation. These include a thorough review of the implementation capacity of all current and future implementing agencies, to enable a more systematic strengthening of national implementation capacities as well as to provide for implementation support by cooperating agencies. Likewise, a system for joint monitoring and evaluation, as well as arrangements for impact assessment, are being designed and will be implemented during the extension phase of the CCF.

IV. RECOMMENDATION

15. The Administrator recommends that the Executive Board approve the extension of the first CCF for Bangladesh for a period of two years, through June 2000.

Annex

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION TARGET TABLE FOR BANGLADESH (1999-2000)

(In thousands of United States dollars)

Source	Amount	Comments
UNDP CORE FUNDS		
Estimated carry-over	43 408	
TRAC 1.1.1	18 411	Assigned immediately to country
TRAC 1.1.2	0 to 66.7 per cent of TRAC 1.1.1	This range of percentages is presented for initial planning purposes only. The actual assignment will depend on the availability of high-quality programmes. Any increase in the range of percentages would also be subject to availability of resources.
SPPD/STS	1 240	
Subtotal	63 059a/	
NON-CORE FUNDS		
Government cost-sharing	-	
Sustainable development funds	5 770	
	of which:	
GEF	5 000	
Montreal Protocol	420	
Capacity 21	350	
Third-party cost-sharing	8 600	
Funds, trust funds and other		
UNCDF	12 000	
Subtotal	26 370	
GRAND TOTAL	89 429a/	

a/ Not inclusive of TRAC 1.1.2, which is allocated regionally for subsequent country application.

Abbreviations: GEF = Global Environmental Fund; SPPD = support for policy and programme development; STS = support for technical services; TRAC = target for resource assignments from the core; and UNCDF = United Nations Capital Development Fund.